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THE NEW EL GRECO FRAME

Upon the opposite page will be found a photographic reproduction of the "Assumption of the Virgin," by El Greco, as now installed in Room 45 at the Art Institute. Mention was made in the last Bulletin that an order had been given to Mr. Hermann Dudley Murphy of Boston, to make a frame suitable to the picture, which is the most important work of Greco out of Spain.

Mr. Murphy is well known as a landscape painter, and is an instructor and lecturer on art in Harvard University. He made a special exhibition of paintings at the Art Institute in 1900, and conducted classes for a time in the methods of Mr. Denman Ross. During the last few years he has given much attention to the designing and manufacture of artistic picture frames.

According to John Stuart Mill, a man who executes any piece of work with the aim of doing it as well as it can be done, that is, who aspires to perfection of execution, is working in the spirit of the artist. From this point of view the frame of the Greco is certainly a work of art, and it is so important an example of art craftsmanship as to merit a description. In the architectural design Mr. Murphy was assisted by Mr. Samuel W. Mead, architect, of Boston. It is Spanish Renaissance in style, such a frame as might have had its place behind the altar of the Spanish church in which the picture was originally placed. It is made of seasoned and selected pine wood from Michigan, and every square inch has been gone over with the carving tools to relieve it from the mechanical surfaces. No composition of any kind has been used, the ornament having been carved throughout. The gilding is done after the old Italian method over the red-clay gold size, and is burnished all over. There is

none of the oil gilding usual in present day frames. The gold is treated to give it an appearance of age, and the frame is toned, though not very obviously, with semi-transparent blue, and in some places with rose, as a background to the carving. This work of toning was done in harmony with the color of the picture by Mr. Murphy's own hand after the picture was in the frame.

The frame is about nineteen feet high and stands upon a base of Levanto marble. It has been necessary to furnish it with a plate glass, and its whole weight is not far from 2,500 pounds. It is hinged to the wall, and so arranged that one side can be rolled out on a traversing plate in the floor to render picture and glass accessible for cleaning.

Mr. Murphy excels some masters of arts and crafts who have professed philanthropic and even socialistic principles, in wishing to give credit to the workmen associated with him.

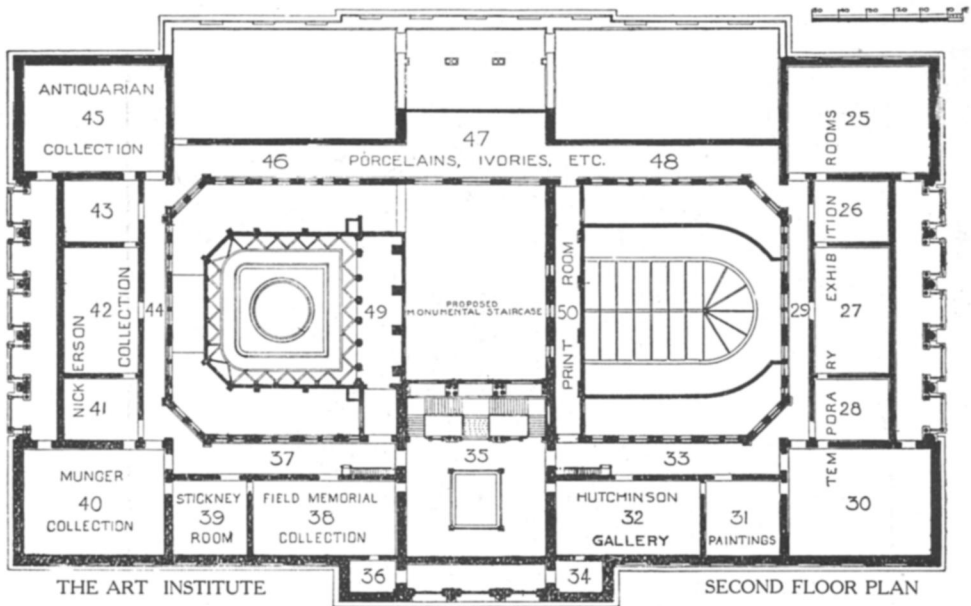
He writes, "Mr. Walfred Thulin is a Swede, a member of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, and a carver who takes as much pleasure in his work as I do in my painting, a man who is thoroughly an artist. William Dixon has been gilding for forty-five years, and I doubt if there is to be found another man so skilled or thorough in the old method of gilding. Other workmen, both carvers and gilders, worked on the frame, but to these two and their experience is due the quality of the workmanship."

The exhibition of the work of American Industrial Schools, under the auspices of the Municipal Museum, announced in the last number of the Bulletin, was postponed, and will be held in Blackstone Hall at the Art Institute from Jan. 23 to Feb. 2, upon the occasion of the Convention of the American Association for the Promotion of Industrial Education. The sessions of the association will be held Jan. 23, 24, 25.



THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN, BY EL GRECO.

The photograph is taken in an oblique view to show the frame and installation, the picture having been published before. See opposite page.



OBJECTS NEWLY INSTALLED

OR TEMPORARILY EXHIBITED, JANUARY, 1908.

ROOM	OBJECTS	SOURCE
12	Bronze Dog and Tortoise, by Barye	Gift of Jules Berchem
15	Greek Kylix, V century B. C.	Gift of Martin A. Ryerson
20	"The Church" and "The Synagogue," from Strassburg Cathedral (plaster)	Purchased from Blackstone Fund
20	Orders of Architecture, reduced models	Purchased from Blackstone Fund
35	Bronze group, by MacNeil, "The Sun Vow"	Lent by Howard Shaw
44	Painting, by Marilhat, "French Courtyard"	Gift of Mrs. C. S. Kirchberger
44	Paintings, Kowalski, Volz, Henner	Lent by Mrs. C. S. Kirchberger
44	Painting, by Bonnat, Italian Girl	Lent by O. W. Potter Estate
44	Painting, by Whistler, portrait	Lent by the owner
45	Painting, by Cranach, "Night in Gethsemane"	Gift of the Antiquarians
45	Flemish Tapestry, religious subjects	Gift of the Antiquarians
45	Japanese Robe	Gift of Mrs. Alexander F. Stevenson
45	Dalmatic, 17th century, Genoese	Gift of Mrs. Harold McCormick
50	Engravings and Prints	Selected from the Stickney Collection